1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

776 793 or official spokesman of the Siem's Durbar. Another post of oak in this house is furnished by the people of the State.

342 179 353 The houses of the well-to-do Khasis of the present day in Mawkhar and Cherrapunji are built after the modern style with iron roofs, chimneys, glass windows and doors. In Jowai the well-to-do traders have excellent houses of the European pattern, which are as comfortable as many of the European subordinates' quarters in Shillong. Some up-to-date families in Shillong and at Cherra allow themselves muslin curtains and European furniture.

342 [824] The houses of the Pnar-Wárs are peculiar. The roof, which is thatched with the leaves of a palm called *u tynriew*, is hog-backed and the eaves come down almost to the ground. There are three rooms in the Wár as in the Khasi house, although called by different names in the Wár dialect. The hearth is [361] in the centre room. The houses are built flush with the ground and are made of bamboos. In the Wár villages of Nongjri and 346 Umniuh there are small houses erected in the compounds of 782 the ordinary dwelling-houses called *ieng ksuid* (spirit houses). In these houses offerings to the spirits of departed family ancestors are placed at intervals, this practice being very similar to the more ancient form of Shintoism. In some Wár villages 342 there are also separate bachelors' quarters. This custom is in accordance with that of the Naga tribes. There is no such custom amongst the Khasi Uplanders. The Wár houses are similar to those of the Pnar Wárs, except that a portion of the house is generally built on a platform, the main house resting on the hill-side and the portion on the platform projecting therefrom, the object being to obtain more space, the area for houses in the village sites being often limited owing to the steepness of the hill-sides.

The Bhoi and Lynngam houses are practically similar, and may be described together. They are generally built on fairly high platforms of bamboo, are frequently 30 to 40 ft. in length, and are divided into various compartments in order [354] to suit the needs of the family. The hearth, which is of earth, is in the centre room. There is a platform at the back of the Lynngam house, and in front of the Bhoi house, used for drying paddy, spreading chillies, &c., and for sitting on when the day's

pendable water supply. Villages are about two to five miles apart, and have no boundary markers. In the past, villages contained semipublic buildings and grounds: the home of the village priest (also the home of a chief if he resided in that village), the village marketplace, and tree groves, cremation grounds, or other awesome spots that were believed to be inhabited by supernatural beings. Villages today may have also one or more Christian churches, government social welfare buildings, and schools. Formerly, villages were entered through a guarded gateway; this is no longer the case, and paths feed into villages from all directions. Often several villages are nucleated into one large unit, named and also described as a "village." These were once defense units, but were so uncohesive otherwise that institutionalized rivalry obtained among the component villages. Now, they have been integrated through the agency of all-village public services, especially schools. **Housing.** The traditional Khasi house is entered through a door at the rounded end of a U-shaped ground plan, and is about 20 feet at widest extent, it is about 30 feet deep, and is elliptical or hogback in profile. Its walls are of stone blocks cemented with mud. The roof of grass thatch, supported by a bamboo frame, overhangs the walls on their outside, down to about three feet above the ground. The house is divided into two parts: the front one-third is on the ground level, floored either with stone blocks or tamped earth, and is used for storage of occupational instruments and as a shelter for poultry. The rear two-thirds is raised four feet on piles of stone blocks to a platform of planks, and is partitioned into six rooms, comprising a kitchen, areas for storage of food and water, and sleeping quarters. Furniture is minimal, and the house is totally undecorated. There are no windows, and no smoke vents. A house generally has a companion shed, walled of wood and grass matting and thatched with grass. This serves as a pigsty, but it may be partitioned also to house cows, and it may have a loft for fuel storage. Compounds often contain garden plots, and are fenced around with stone or bamboo and mud. Nowadays, the traditional house has given way to Western-style bungalows of wood and tin, especially in and around Shillong. [Cf. Mukherjee et al. 1941.]

361 [944] [443] [778] [346] [178] [712] [628] [178] [182] 342 352 353 354 343 351 177 184 342

ECONOMY. The Khasi economy is a market economy based on agriculture, and most Khasis are primary producers, sellers, middlemen, and/or providers of services in connection with markets. Khasis are often multioccupational: they produce goods for partial subsistence, and also play some part in trade. **Agriculture.** On the Shillong plateau, the major field crops are potatoes, maize, millets, and dry rice, still produced mostly through swidden farming, with a two- to three-year period of fallow, but increasingly through continuous use of a single field with the aid of ma-

241 433 443 [463] 241